2 March 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Getting Into NSC/PRM-11

1. PRM-11 directs the DCI to chair a subcommittee of the SCC and, further, suggests a methodology for getting into the review of the structure and mission of intelligence. That methodology is implicit in paragraph 2 in the words "review the responsibilities and powers of the DCI, etc." That, I submit, is the conventional way of tackling the problem--list the responsibilities of the DCI as they are known or perceived and then examine his authority and Community organizations and mechanisms in light of those responsibilities, hoping along the way to discover " doable" ways of improving intelligence. I am uneasy about this, the conventional approach, because it may omit responsibilities the DCI should have or assign him responsibilities he should not have.

2. It seems to me that any review of national intelligence should begin by identifying the problem. Just what problem or problems does the current review aim to solve? Is something wrong, or is this merely an exercise to assure ourselves that nothing is wrong? The answer, of course, is that lots of things are wrong and we pretty well know what those things are. So suppose we began by making a list of problems. It might be argued that such a list would be random, would lack structure, or would lack an orderly way of getting into the problem; might overlook something. I suggest, then, that the early effort of the review group should aim at devising an orderly method of stating the problems of the U.S. intelligence effort that the study aims to solve.

3. One possible way, for example, might be to simply ask the two basic questions to which the President and the DCI will want answers:

> * Is the U.S. foreign intelligence effort
>   well-managed?
>
> * Is the U.S. foreign intelligence product
>   as good as it ought to be?

A corporate president would ask exactly these same questions about the company he must run. He would want assurance that the company was well-managed and that the good or service it produced satisfied consumer demand and was competitive in the marketplace. Our problem is similar.

     a. One way of getting into the management question in a structured way would be to subdivide the topic into two called operations and support. Operations would encompass intelligence functions such as collection, assessment, production, covert action, and counterintelligence. Support would encompass resource control, management mechanisms, organizational relationships, authority, and efficiencies. Hence, the real problems of intelligence would begin to surface; e.g.:

          • Does the DCI really control a nationally-coordinated all-source collection effort? (Collection)

          • Is covert action always consistent with other Government programs? (Covert action)

          • Is there a disconnect between the DCI's Community staff and the production of national intelligence? (Management mechanisms)

     b. Similarly, a way of getting into the product problem might be to examine internal controls and external relationships. Here again, key questions would lead to the real problems that need solving; e.g.:

          • How and by whom are intelligence products evaluated?

          • Is service always timely?

          • How do consumer needs become intelligence requirements?

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4. This is, admittedly, surface treatment of a mind-boggling problem. But I hope we can influence the review process at the outset so as to avoid a great expenditure of effort on nonproblems. Mr. Carter wants a comprehensive review. Let us start that review by identifying real problems. To begin with the traditional process of listing the DCI's responsibilities runs the risk of dealing only with responsibility-associated problems. There are plenty of others, and this is probably a great time to begin solving them.

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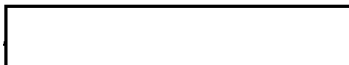
Policy and Plans Division, OPP

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